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THE FOURTH EDITION
MUCH IMPROVED.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE
FRAUDS, &c.
Of that ARCH IMPOSTOR,
CHARLES PRICE.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

Entered at Stationers Hall.

CHA.s PRICE in his usual Dress.

CHA.s PRICE in Disguise.

as described in the Public Papers. vide Page 13 of these Memoirs.

Published as the act directs by G Kearsley in Fleet Street LONDON, Feb.y 10.th 1786.

THE FOURTH EDITION,

MUCH IMPROVED

Being a more minute and particular Account of that ARCH IMPOSTOR

CHARLES PRICE,

Otherwiſe PATCH, *otherwiſe* WILMOT, *otherwiſe* POWEL, *otherwiſe* BRANT, *&c. &c. &c.*

MANY YEARS A

STOCK-BROKER AND LOTTERY-OFFICE-KEEPER

In LONDON AND WESTMINSTER:

In this Edition the *whole* of his various FORGERIES and FRAUDS are circumſtantially related; together with his Origin, and all the material Occurrences of his Life, equally diſgraceful to human Nature, till he began that deſperate Undertaking of

Forgeries on the Bank of England.

In the carrying on of which, he, in the moſt artful and ſurpriſing Manner, baffled every Mode of Detection, ſet on foot by the Directors and the Magiſtrates of Bow-Street, for a Series of Six Years.

With this Edition is given, as a Frontiſpiece, an exact Repreſentation of his Perſon, in the Diſguiſe he wore when he negotiated his firſt Parcel of Counterfeit Bank Notes, in the Year 1780, and likewiſe another Portrait of him in his uſual Dreſs.

LONDON.
PRINTED FOR THE EDITOR,
(By whoſe Permiſſion ſmall part only of theſe MEMOIRS firſt appeared in the ENGLISH CHRONICLE.)
And Sold by G. KEARSLEY, at No. 46, in Fleet-Street,
MDCCLXXXVI.

PREFACE.

A SMALL part of theſe extraordinary Memoirs, which record the tranſactions of the moſt finiſhed and notorious cheat that ever diſgraced human nature, appeared originally in a new evening paper, called the ENGLISH CHRONICLE, which is rapidly haſtening to an extenſive circulation, in conſequence of the proprietors unexampled diligence, in obtaining matter both intereſting and entertaining to lay before their readers.

To preſerve them from ſo fugitive a ſituation, they are here correctly printed, and interwoven with a *great variety of intereſting facts and ſingular tranſactions, which have not appeared before.* To protect the whole from the depredations of pirates, this fourth, and much improved edition, is entered at STATIONERS-HALL.

Had the hero of this tale (which muſt aſtoniſh beyond deſcription all who read it) taken but a ſmall portion of the pains in reputable purſuits, which he did in thoſe of quite an oppoſite nature, he would, in all probability, have been a uſeful member of ſociety.

The frontiſpiece is an exact repreſentation of Price's whole figure, when he diſguiſed himſelf to negociate the firſt parcel of counterfeit Bank Notes. Vide the Advertiſement in Pages 13 and 14.

The other Figure repreſents him in his common dreſs—his features were remarkable, and the likeneſs is exceedingly ſtrong.

A D-

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE *rapid ſale of the three large impreſſions of this work has been equalled only by the marked indignation, which a candid Public has ſhewn to the moſt pitiful piracy that ever diſgraced the records of illiberal impoſition.*

Could we compliment the Party by terming his mutilated production a Copy *of our* Firſt *edition, we ſhould, even then, ſtamp ſome credit on ſuch a literary abortion; but, as the whole of the publication contained not two thirds of that edition, we ſhall only obſerve, that the unfairneſs of the attempt kept pace with the audacity of the falſhood, viz.* "*That it was publiſhed by Order of the Directors of* "*the Bank of England!*"

But, having been detected by the very beſt authority, that truly reſpectable one he ſo wantonly made uſe of, he, like a true uſurper, was reſolved to let his cataſtrophe be as bold as his treaſon; and, as the ne plus ultra *of ungenerous fiction, had the modeſty to caution his readers againſt the identical work he ſo piratically mutilated.*

We ſhall leave the narrow Plagiariſm in that obſcurity to which it is ſo meritedly conſigned. At the ſame time returning our warm acknowledgments to the gentlemen of the Bank in general, and to ABRAHAM NEWLAND, *Eſq. principal caſhier, in particular, for empowering us to expoſe the unhandſome undertaking*

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

CHARLES PRICE.

WHEN FIELDING wrote his Hiſtory of a GREAT MAN, the hero of his tale poſſeſſed no other requiſites for ſuch an appellation, than having been at the head of a gang of pitiful pick-pockets, foot-pads, and receivers of ſtolen goods. We hardly need inform the reader, that we allude to his life of JONATHAN WILD.

Such, however, were the abilities of the ingenious author, that, in his hands, the life of the loweſt reptile gave very high ſatisfaction.

The Hiſtory of CHARLES PRICE differs as much from that of JONATHAN WILD, as the face of a Chimney-ſweeper does from the complexion of Prince Oroonoko.

The lives of the famous Czar Peter, and Charles XII. by Voltaire, afforded that genius an opportunity of diſplaying his wit, by the moſt laconic and ſatyrical tranſpoſition. He ſtyled the King, Charles the Great, and the Emperor, the Great Peter.

This forcible diſtinction of characters is applicable

cable to the two firſt-mentioned great men. Mr. Wild muſt remain as the GREAT JONATHAN, but *our* hero, Mr. Price, will for ever live as CHARLES THE GREAT.

In relating the tranſactions of this eminent villain, it would be ſome ſatisfaction to us if we could adhere to that wiſe and ancient maxim, *De mortuis nil niſi bonum*; for it was founded in charity to the dead—it humanely ſuppoſed, that the deceaſed had ſome good qualities to counterpoiſe his bad ones, and, therefore, that the latter ought to glide, with the body, into a ſilent grave. But Mr. Price was an exception to the ſuppoſition. With every bad qualification, thoſe who knew him moſt intimately, cannot recollect he poſſeſſed even one that was good; and not having it in our power to relate any of his virtues, truth and juſtice will not allow us to bury his vices.

His father, Charles Price, was by trade a taylor, came from South Wales, about the year 1702, and worked as a journeyman at ſeveral places in London. In the year 1710 he got into Monmouth-ſtreet, as a journeyman to a ſaleſman there, and this laid the foundation of the moſt curious ſcenes that ever dignified the fertile invention of diſſipated knavery. By a ſtrict application to his profeſſion, Mr. Price was, in a few years, enabled to ſet up as a maſter in the trade, and kept a ſale-ſhop the corner of Earl-ſtreet and Weſt-ſtreet, Seven Dials. Some time previous to this, he had married, but we are not able to furniſh any account of our hero's mother; nor would it be any ways material to this hiſtory, if we could, otherwiſe than that ſhe was a ſervant in that neighbourhood, a woman who bore a very good character, and has been dead ſome years.

The character of Mr. Price was, that he was a very clever man in his buſineſs, but very illiterate, and equally proud.—That he was exceeding artful, and the flower of Monmouth ſtreet for oratory, in the ſale of his goods. At the ſame time, he was ſincere in his friendſhips, deſpiſed downright knavery, and had a regard to reputation. He had two ſons, the eldeſt was named *Thomas*, the ſecond, our hero, *Charles*, and one daughter, who now lives in the ſame ſtreet, with credit and reputation. Thomas was bred to his father's buſineſs, and died at Portſmouth two years ago. He married an orange-girl of the Haymarket, whom he has left a widow with one child. Before we diſmiſs him, we ſhall relate one anecdote, which proves him allied to his younger brother. A Mr. Creed, ſaleſman in Roſemary-lane, uſed to ſend him with a cart loaded with goods round the country; and Mr. Creed dying, honeſt Thomas decamped with the produce of one journey, which was about 200l. Sir Samuel Fludyer was aſſignee to Mr. Creed, and Tom taking care never to return till after Sir Samuel's death, the creditors were robbed of that ſum. Suffice it to ſay of him further, that for this, and other ſimilar acts of knavery, his father ſerved him as he did his brother Charles, leaving them only a ſhilling each, and the whole of his property to his daughter.

To return to our hero.—When he was about ſix years of age, he was ſent to a ſchool in Queen-ſtreet, near Soho Square, kept by a Mr. Beardmore, and his father, ſeeing him a lad likely to improve, removed him to Mr. Knollet, who kept an academy in Queen-ſtreet, Seven Dials. It was there he firſt acquired the rudiments of the French language, and, as is too often the caſe, whilſt he was

taught *French* by a *Swiſs*, his native language was neglected, ſo that he was neither complete in one or the other. At this ſchool he continued till he was about twelve years old, and then he was taken home to aſſiſt his father, where he ſoon gave proofs of an early addreſs in his profeſſion, which the following inſtance will explain.

A ſailor had ſtaggered to Monmouth-ſtreet, to buy ſome cloaths, and was caught by our hero at the corner, who ſoon introduced him into a room, where it is ſo ingeniouſly contrived, that in the noon of a ſummers day, it is hardly poſſible to diſtinguiſh a blue from a black, or a green from a blue coat. The honeſt tar was ſhewn a coat and waiſtcoat, the real value of which was about two guineas. Though they were conſiderably too little, Charley ſqueezed him up, and perſuaded the fellow that they fitted him exactly.—The price being demanded, Charley declared upon his honour, that the loweſt farthing he could take was five guineas. The tar, who ſimply believed that no man was capable of ſo ſolemn an aſſertion to an untruth, put his hand in his pocket, and laid down the money. Charley's cunning, which had never been deficient when an advantage could be taken in an honeſt way, ſuggeſted to him that five guineas for an article worth but two was hardly profit enough, and therefore ſtepped down to his father's journeyman below, under pretence of getting ſomething to put the cloaths up in. To him Charley lamented his folly, adding, that "he had a *fine flat* above ſtairs, and that he might "as well have had ſix guineas as five." "Do you," ſaid he, "follow me up ſtairs, enquire what "I have done, pretend to be very angry, ſwear "they coſt you ſix guineas, give me two or three

"kicks

"kicks or cuffs, and I dare ſwear we ſhall get "more money out of him, and then, as my father "is not at home, you ſhall go halves in all we get "above the five guineas." The ſcheme was readily acquieſced in by the journeyman. Charley ſlipped up ſtairs, and preſently the journeyman followed. Inquiry, blame, and ſham blows enſued; the journeyman ſwore the cloaths coſt him ſix guineas out of his pocket, and was going to beat Charley again, when the ſailor cried, "Avaſt, "maſter, don't beat the boy, if he has made a miſ-"take in a guinea, why here it is," and laying it down, departed well pleaſed with his bargain, but more ſo at having ſaved the lad a drubbing by the inſignificant trifle of an additional guinea. The fact is, Charley gave his father two guineas, the journeyman half a one, and kept three guineas and a half to himſelf.

Though this was one of the tricks of trade, and perhaps by a jury of commercial caſuiſts the verdict may be "JUSTIFIABLE DISHONESTY;" yet the event proved that it was the ſeed of knavery, which, ripened by the dunghill of an over-reaching inclination, poiſoned the ſoil it very rarely fertilizes to advantage.

But as all vice riſes progreſſively, it was not long before the father experienced the effects of his ſon's genius. And with this obſervation we cannot but lament, that the method he took to rob his father was an early indication of that ſcheme which led to his immediate deſtruction. Our hero had formed a connection with a youth of ſuitable principles with his own, and being between fifteen and ſixteen years of age, they agreed upon an *excurſion*. They each propoſed ways and means, but Charley's companion not having it in his

power to procure a ſufficient ſum for the purpoſe, our hero hit on an expedient as artful as availing. His father was out of town, and he forged a draft in his name, on a gentleman with a letter, in which he requeſted the favour of 20l. for an immediate purpoſe. The gentleman accepted it, and his banker paid the ſum, which Charley obtained, and was never ſeen for a week afterwards, when he and his companion were found at a houſe of reception in Covent Garden. It is eaſy enough to conceive the confuſion between Mr. Price and the gentleman, when they firſt met, and how ſhocked the father muſt have been at ſuch an inſtance of depraved ingenuity in his ſon. He readily paid the money, and had not the tranſaction happened between friends, our hero perhaps would then have paid that fee to a certain eſquire of the county of Middleſex, of which he lately ſo ill-naturedly deprived him, when in cuſtody for forgery in Tothilfields Bridewell.

Numberleſs had been his tricks and knaveries, but this laſt determined his father to get rid of him, and, for that purpoſe, he put him apprentice to a hatter and hoſier in St. James's-ſtreet, giving with him a conſiderable premium to his maſter, hoping that his conduct, when abroad, would be quite different from what it had been at home, and that he would never dare to take the ſame liberties with a maſter he had done with a father. This is a very common opinion, and as vague as it is common. The ſon that will cheat a father, will cheat the whole world; and to put ſuch a ſon to another perſon, is like ſending him to ſea to mend his manners. The chance of his being drowned is indeed in their favour; but the proverb of, *He that is born to be hanged will never be*

drowned, militates againſt this ſorrowful expedient.

When about ſeventeen years of age, he was apprenticed as aforeſaid, he had not been long, there before his maſter had almoſt as much reaſon to complain of him as his father. Among his other tricks, was the following extraordinary one. He robbed his father of an elegant ſuit of cloaths, in which he dreſt himſelf and went to his maſter, of whom he purchaſed about 10l. worth of ſilk ſtockings, left his addreſs, Benjamin Bolingbroke, Eſq. Hanover Square, and ordered them to be ſent him in an hour's time, when he would pay the perſon who brought them. Incredible as it may appear, his maſter did not know him, and to complete the cheat, our hero came back in half an hour, in his uſual dreſs, was ordered to take the goods home, which he actually pretended to do, and thus robbed both maſter and father. This was the laſt trick, however, he had in his power to play either of them, for being detected, he ran away from the former, and the latter, in deteſtation of his principles, diſinherited him of that ſhare which otherwiſe would have fallen to him at his father's death.

Having thus left both, he entered the world and became a robber at large; nor can there be much room to doubt but that the idea of diſguiſing himſelf, which he has practiſed for ſo many years paſt, was ſuggeſted to him by the circumſtance of having been brought up where he had opportunities to ſhift his cloaths as he pleaſed. Little more can be learned of him for ſeveral years. His father lived in credit, and what is very remarkable, was the firſt corpſe ever carried over Weſtminſter Bridge, which was on the firſt

day

day it was opened for carriages, when he was taken over in a hearſe, ſurrounded by multitudes, who flocked to ſee the opening of ſo noble a ſtructure, and was buried at Lambeth.

Thus abandoned by his father, the world lay before him where to chooſe. Tired of trade, which he reckoned beneath the character of a gentleman—of confinement, which did not correſpond with his notions of diſſipation—he became a gentleman's ſervant, and in that capacity lived ſome years, till he got into the ſervice of Sir Francis Blake Delaval, went with him the tour of Europe, returned to England, and through Sir Francis, who was the boſom companion of the late Samuel Foote, Eſq. became comedian. That he acted a principal part in that well-known buſineſs, by which Sir Francis obtained his lady, with a very large fortune, in which Mr. Foote performed the character of the conjurer, and afterwards contrived to conjure that gentleman out of 500l. in a ſham ſcheme in the brewery, in which buſineſs that gentleman and Mr. Price were concerned. That he was made a bankrupt, and afterwards ſet up in the diſtillery, defrauded the revenue, was ſent to the King's-Bench, was releaſed by an inſolvent act, again turned brewer, defrauded a very capital gentleman in that branch, now living, out of 6000l. by the aſſiſtance of the lady afore-mentioned, in one of his diſguiſes. He was alſo delineated ſome years ſince in a book entitled the Swindler's Chronicle.—Became Lottery-Office-Keeper, then Stock-Broker, gambled in the Alley, was ruined by it, again ſet up Lottery-Office Keeper, courted Mrs. Pounteney, ran away with the niece, who was the daughter of Juſtice Wood in the Borough, and lived with both. We have ſaid enough already

of

of his character to ſhew what he was capable of, and what ought to have been to him, as well as to every perſon breathing, a certain though ſtale maxim, that HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.

To enumerate the various frauds and ſwindling tranſactions of this adept in deception, would ſwell the account beyond the poſſible bounds of a ſhilling pamphlet. From what has been already mentioned, the reader will be enabled to judge of the capability of his head, and ſhew the tinge of a heart, which never were at reſt without levelling their attacks on his beſt and deareſt friends. In robbing the public, he had effrontery enough to avow his depredations, and to laugh at thoſe whom he injured; but his friends were plundered under the diſguiſe of perfect honeſty; and ſuch was his art and fineſſe, that the more he plundered them, the more he ſecured their confidence.

The following late fact will explain Mr. Price, better than a thouſand comments:

He was very intimate with a gentleman, now living at Knightſbridge, Mr. R—s. formerly a grocer, but retired from buſineſs. The meaſures he took to prepare this gentleman, as a dupe to the moſt conſummate piece of knavery, were as follow: Mr. Price had for a long time paſſed as a ſtock-broker; and his friend, Mr. R. had always entertained that opinion of him. To ſecure Mr. R.'s good opinion of his independent ſituation in life, Mr. Price, who then lived at Knightſbridge, frequently uſed to requeſt the favour of Mr. R. to take a bank-note or two into the city, and get them changed into ſmall ones. In this he had a two-fold plot. Firſt, he made himſelf a man of conſequence with Mr. R. and thereby laid him open

to

to his future ſcheme: and ſecondly, the identical notes which Mr. R. brought him back, ſerved as copies for Price to engrave his counterfeit ones from. And in this Price gratified his higheſt ſtretch of diſſimulation—for his *friend* became a double dupe. Matters went on in this mode of friendſhip, till Price found Mr. R. ready to fall a ſacrifice to any plan he might propoſe; and being thus ripe for the purpoſe, Price began the ſecond act of his play. He then informed his friend that he was intimately acquainted with a very old gentleman, who was exceedingly rich, as well in landed as in perſonal eſtates, who had been a very eminent broker in the alley, but had long retired. That his monies in the funds were immenſe, and that the only relation he had in the world was one ſiſter, to whom he intended to bequeath the beſt part of his property—that his ſiſter was near fifty years of age, had never been married, was determined never to marry, and that it was impoſſible the old gentleman could live long, as he was very old, very infirm, and almoſt incapable of going out of doors. The reader, by this time, will probably begin to recollect Mr. Patch under this deſcription, and, in fact, it meant no other. But *this* Mr. Patch, now wore the name of Mr. Bond, an inhabitant of Union-court, Leather-lane, Holborn. What could induce Mr. Price, who piled as many ſchemes upon ſchemes as there were ſtones in the tower of Babel, to fix on ſo ſingular a name, may perhaps be collected, if we conſider that it was moſt probable, the name of *Bond*, ſleeping or waking, was always uppermoſt in his thoughts; and as he well knew that Mr. Bond of Bow-ſtreet had been yearly upon the watch for him, the name

tripped

tripped off his tongue as the involuntary impulſe of conſcious guilt.

This old gentleman, Price repreſented to his friend, had often aſked him to become his executor; and alſo beſought him to recommend another perſon, in whoſe fidelity, character, and integrity, Mr. Bond could repoſe an entire confidence, and that he would make it well worth their while, if they would undertake ſo friendly and ſolemn an office.—" Now," ſaid Mr. Price to Mr. R. " here is an opportunity for us to make a " conſiderable ſûm in a ſhort time, and, in all " probability, a very capital fortune in a few " years; for the ſiſter being determined never to " marry, and having no relations in the world, " there is no doubt but ſhe will leave us the whole " of the eſtate, as I now ſtand upon ſuch terms " with her brother; and, after his deceaſe, ſhe " will become totally dependent upon us.—I ſhall " ſee Mr. Bond to-day, and if you will join in " the truſt, the will ſhall be immediately made."

To this propoſal Mr. R. readily conſented, and we may venture to ſay without much heſitation.—In the evening Price returned to Knightſbridge. He told Mr. R. that he had ſeen Mr. Bond, who expreſſed great happineſs and eaſineſs of mind on ſuch a recommendation, and deſired to ſee Mr. R. the next day. Price appointed to meet him at twelve o'clock at Mr. Bond's, and in a ſhort time after the appointed hour, Mr. R. knocked at the door.—He was ſhewn up ſtairs by the aforementioned ſiſter lady, and introduced to Mr. Bond, ſeated in a great chair, his legs in another, and covered with a night-cap. We leave the imagi-

nation to ſupply any further deſcription. The poor, infirm, weak, debilitated old gentleman, regretted the abſence of his ever dear friend Mr. Price, the moſt worthy man in the world, and he rang a peal on his friendſhip, honour, honeſty, integrity, &c. &c. accompanied with emaciated coughs—was obliged to go to the city coffee-houſe—a punctual man—never failed an appointment—it was the ſoul of buſineſs—and then he told Mr. R. that his dear friend deſired to meet him there exactly at one o'clock—he approved highly of Mr. Price's recommendation, and was now happy in his mind—it wanted but a quarter to one he believed, and he hoped Mr. R. would not fail, as his dear friend was very exact indeed. The uſual compliments paſſed; the ſiſter conducted Mr. R. to the door, who poſted away to the city coffee-houſe, and left old Maſter Bond, the rich brother, who was in reality no other than Mr. Price, and the brother's maiden ſiſter, who was in fact Mrs. Pounteney, to laugh at Mr. R's credulity. This ſecond act being over, the third began, and the plot began to thicken, for Mr. R. had not been five minutes in the coffee-houſe before he was joined by his friend Price, to whom Mr. R. recapitulated what paſſed at the old broker's, and as ſoon as Price had diſpatched ſome pretended buſineſs, he propoſed calling on Mr. Bond. This was readily acquieſced in by Mr. R. and away they drove to Leather-lane; when they came there, they were informed by the lady that her brother was juſt gone out in a coach on an airing to Highgate. In ſhort, he carried on the comedy ſo compleatly for ſeveral days, during which time Mr. R. had

twice or thrice ſeen the old gentleman,—the will was made, and on the ſtrength of the joint executorſhip, Mr. R. was ſwindled out of very near 1000l. in caſh, and bonds to the amount of 200l. which fraud was never diſcovered till Mr. Price's apprehenſion, after which Mr. R. got up his bonds from Mrs. P. to whom he gave a note for the amount, and which he is determined never to pay.

However credulous Mr. R. may appear to people who imagine themſelves wiſer, or however extravagant the tale may tell, we vouch its authenticity.

The following anecdote, though it proves him an artful, deſigning fellow, yet has nothing in it which exhibits him in his uſual Proteus character. He had formed a connexion and an intimacy with Mr. W———, a brewer, a man of reſpect and character. To him Price, who was then in the brewery, propoſed a project for purchaſing hops to the amount of 2000l. Price actually went into the country, contracted for hops to that amount, with ſeveral hop-growers in Kent, and then applied to Mr. W. for the 2000l. pretending that a ſudden riſe of hops would take place, and they could not be delivered too ſoon; and that Mr. W. ſhould have his ſhare of the profit. Whatever were Mr. W's motives we know not, but he refuſed to advance the money. The fact is, an unexpected riſe did ſoon after take place, Price went into Kent to demand delivery—the growers, perhaps not perfectly ſatisfied with their purchaſer, were ſhy in delivering, eſpecially as they found they had made a bad bargain, which Price taking

an advantage of, inſiſted on, and gained 200l. to be off, and was accordingly paid it. We mention this little circumſtance to ſhew that Price *was never out of his way*, and that when he laid a trap for 2000l. his ſcheme, though it failed in part, brought him 200l.

He was ſervile to extreme meanneſs, where his ſervility could be recompenced by a ſhilling. He was maſter of the moſt conſummate effrontery and impudence, when juſtice called upon him for that ſhilling, if unſupported by law; and he never paid it but with an eye to further plunder; and then he abounded with ſuch profeſſions of honeſty, that all who could read mankind ſaw he did not poſſeſs a grain of it. In fine, he was a true Lottery-Office-Adventurer. He was alſo an adept in that ſpecies of flattery diſtinguiſhed by us under the word *palaver*.—He poſſeſſed an extenſive knowledge of men and manners, and was a proficient in reading the heart of man, and, to ſuperficial obſervers, appeared a very ſenſible perſon. He was converſant in moſt of the living languages, had a ſmattering of each, but maſter of none, and not having had the advantages of a liberal education, he was very deficient even in his own. He had travelled all over France, and Holland, and been at moſt of the German courts. He was at Copenhagen during the time of the unhappy fate of the late queen of Denmark, ſiſter to our Sovereign, and he, at that time, wrote a pamphlet, clearing her of all ſuſpicions, and in which he pointed out the true cauſe of that degrading attack on what was more dear to her than her life, her character, thereby to effect an intended revo-

lution

lution in favour of the Queen Dowager's ſon. One of thoſe pamphlets he gave Mr. Fenwick, the keeper of Tothilfields Bridewell, which we have lately read, and though drawn up in very imperfect language, yet it proved him to have an eye directed to the cabals of the Court, and an underſtanding capable of developing its intrigues. His character about the 'Change in London was well-known--he was a keen, intriguing ſpeculator, well verſed in the myſtery of the Bulls and Bears—his head enabled him to make the moſt accurate calculations, but his heart would not permit him to enjoy the fruits of even his honeſt labours, if ſuch they might be deemed, for, if poſſible, he never would comply with the demands of a fortunate cuſtomer, unleſs actually terrified into it; and to terrify him required no ſmall portion of ingenuity and reſolution.—This natural propenſity to diſhoneſty was the ſpring of all his misfortunes; it made him ſhift from place to place to avoid the abuſe of the vulgar, and the clamorous calls of lucky adventurers. His laſt office was the corner of King-ſtreet, Covent Garden, from whence he was driven, about ſix years ago, by a moſt unaccountable run of ill-luck, and eſteemed himſelf happy in a private decampment.

Ever ſince that period, Mr. Price has lived in obſcurity; and, as it was then he began his diſhoneſt practices, it is a ſingular circumſtance for reflection, that no man can live happy who offends againſt the laws of his country, particularly in thoſe inſtances which, as they are the moſt dangerous and deſtructive to ſociety, naturally call for

for every exertion to detect, and where wiſdom and power united can never fail, at laſt, in the accompliſhment.

His domeſtic character was ſtill worſe—though a perfect ſycophant abroad, at home he was the moſt abſolute tyrant; nor could a prudent, beautiful, virtuous woman, endowed with every qualification to render the marriage ſtate happy, ſoften a brutality of diſpoſition, when the ample fortune he obtained with her had been ſquandered by him in intrigues, as pitiful as they were expenſive; for with all his outward appearances of gentility, he had a degree of pride that was truly contemptible, and a mind equally low and mean.

We have thought proper to give this general outline of his character, that the reader may be enabled to form ſome idea of the conſiſtency of his conduct, and be prepared for a relation of tranſactions equally as ſurpriſing as that character.

It has been ſaid in the public papers, that he had employed his ſolicitor, appointed his counſel, arranged his affairs with prudence and wiſdom for making his defence, and that opinions had been given on his caſe, ſufficiently favourable to induce him to ſtand trial: not a word of this is true, except the circumſtance of having engaged an attorney. If there is any meaning in the ſuppoſed favourable opinions, it is this: that changing the teller's ticket at the Bank from a ſmall to a larger ſum, payable by a caſhier, was a fraud and not a forgery. Such an anſwer to ſuch a caſe might be given by thoſe people of the profeſſion who are lawyers among tools, and tools among lawyers; but

but we dare aſſert, that Mr. Price would not have applied to any ſuch ſhallow geniuſes; he would have ſtated his caſe to men eminent in the profeſſion, and converſant in the crown law; from them he muſt have been told, that as long as the words WARRANT, or ORDER, for payment of money, remain in the ſtatutes, for the prevention of forgeries, they would have told him, that altering, or publiſhing a teller's ticket knowing it to be altered, with an intention to defraud, is a *ſpecific* forgery; but it is evident, from the event, that Mr. Price placed no confidence in the ſhallow objection—he was conſcious the objection would not avail him—that if his identity was proved he was undone, and his ſole reliance was on the concealment of his perſon; and on this he ſo much relied, that he braved his fate, and courted the encounter, by ſending for the people whom he had employed as Patch, to view him as Price; ſo well was he aſſured that they could never recognize him as the former in the character of the latter.

Before we enter upon the detail of his forgeries on the Bank of England, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that he had formed every requiſite for the perpetuation of his plan. Like an able general, who has his eye directed more to the conſequences attending a defeat, than to the purſuits of a ſucceſs, previouſly uncertain, he prepared every meaſure and ſcheme, progreſſively, from the commencement of his undertaking to the final accompliſhment of it. He was, therefore, never at a loſs what ſtep to purſue on any emergency. If, from any unfortunate event, he ſhould be ſuſpected in his mechanical operations, he took care to carry them

them on not where he lived, with Mrs. Price, his wife, but, at another lodging, with Mrs. Pounteney, where he was not even known by that name, and where could not be deſcribed by his real one. At home he was always Price. Wherever he manufactured his materials, he was in his aſſumed character; ſo that he was Price, or Patch, juſt as his neceſſity required. His plan of negotiation was the reſult of a mature deliberation, and formed on the ſame ſecure principle. The perſons he engaged never knew him in his real character; and, as he was well convinced of the truth of the old ſaying, *humanum eſt errare*, ſo he took all poſſible precaution to be guarded againſt contingencies. For he never ſent an emiſſary to negotiate a note, that he ever loſt ſight of him, either perſonally, or by his agent Mrs. Pounteney, and therefore could never be ſurprized in his projects.

In giving an account of this very extraordinary man, reſpecting his forgeries on the Bank, we ſhall begin where the generality of hiſtorians leave off, with an obſervation on his exit: conſcious of his own guilt, facts hourly riſing upon facts, and a public ignominious death ſtaring him full in the face, he ſunk under the weight of his own fears. Without fortitude to ſupport him in the hour of trial, he determined to avoid the fate of a public execution, by an act of private deſperation. Had his courage been equal to his ſkill, he would have met his fate with a modeſt and reſolute manlineſs; but he rather choſe to convince the world that his cowardice was as great as his cunning: from which one inference may ſafely be drawn, that Mr. Price is a tremendous inſtance that, though art and addreſs

dreſs may triumph for a period, yet when public juſtice overtakes public offenders, human ability is the moſt deceitful and inſufficient prop ingenious guilt can reſt upon. We venture to moralize thus far upon the ſhocking cataſtrophe, becauſe, of all his accumulated crimes, ſelf-murder was his laſt and worſt.

Having a large family of eight children to ſupport, he turned his thoughts to thoſe devices which proved ſo fatal to him; and, what is very extraordinary, always has proved fatal to every man who has recourſe to them (and we will venture to prognoſticate always will)—a forgery on the Bank of England. His firſt attack on the Bank was about the year 1780, when a forged note had been taken there, ſo complete in all its parts, the engraving, the ſignatures, the water-marks, &c. that it paſſed through various hands unſuſpected, and was not diſcovered till it came to a certain department in the routine of that office, and through which no forgery whatever can paſs undiſcovered—This occaſioned a conſiderable alarm among that great and truly reſpectable body of gentlemen, and notes upon notes flowed in, about the Lottery and Chriſtmas times, without even the leaſt poſſibility of tracing out the firſt negociator. Various conſultations were held, various plans laid, and innumerable were the efforts of detection; but in vain—they were traced up to one man from every quarter, always diſguiſed, always inacceſſible; and we will venture to pronounce, the forger would have remained much longer a ſecret, but for the unwearied attention and cool collected plans of Mr. Clarke, a public

officer at Bow-ſtreet, well known for his ingenuity in detecting offenders on the Bank, the Mint, &c. Indeed we may venture to ſay, that had he been left to his own diſcretion, to have followed the dictates of his own underſtanding, and to have carried into execution his own plans, the offender would not have reigned ſo long; for, although thoſe who took upon them the office, were gentlemen of integrity and unblemiſhed characters, they were inſufficient for the undertaking, as the ſagacity of Mr. Price always proved an over match for their zeal, aſſiduity, or ſtratagem. As from its very great importance to ſociety, they took the buſineſs into their own hands, one perſon only excepted, they found, by experience, the inefficacy of their meaſures.

Had Mr. Price permitted a partner in his proceedings—had he employed an engraver—had he procured paper to be made for him, with water marks put upon it, he muſt have been ſoon diſcovered—but Price was himſelf alone; He engraved his own plates, he made his own paper, with the water-marks, and he was his own negociator, thereby confining a ſecret to his own breaſt which he wiſely deemed not ſafe in the breaſt of another; even Mrs. Price had not the leaſt knowledge or ſuſpicion of his proceedings. Having practiſed engraving till he had made himſelf ſufficient maſter of it, he then made his own ink to prove his own works: having purchaſed implements, and manufactured the water-mark, he next ſet himſelf to counterfeit the hand-writings, and ſucceeded ſo far as even to puzzle a part of the firſt body of men in the world. The

abilities of the unhappy Ryland were exerted in his profeſſion, and therefore the impoſition was to be leſs wondered at; but here was a novice in the art, capable of equal deception in every part of the dangerous undertaking, and all attempts to diſcover him proving equally abortive; the Bank came at laſt to the reſolution of deſcribing the offender by the following public advertiſement, which was continued in all the News Papers for a conſiderable time, but to no purpoſe.

Public-Office, Dec. 5, 1780.

A FORGERY.

Whereas a perſon, anſwering the following deſcription, ſtands charged with forging two notes, purporting to be Bank Notes, one for 40*l. and the other for* 20*l. whoever will apprehend him, or give ſuch immediate notice at this office, as may be the means of apprehending him, ſhall receive* One Hundred Pounds *reward on his commitment.*

Or, if any perſon concerned in the above forgery, (except the perſon here-under deſcribed) will ſurrender and diſcover his or her accomplices, he or ſhe will be admitted an evidence for the crown, and, on conviction of any one offender therein, receive Two Hundred Pounds *reward.*

And, if any engraver, Paper-maker, Mould-maker, or Printer, can give information of the engraving any plate, making any mould, or paper, or printing any note reſembling Bank Notes, ſhall receive Two Hundred

dred Pounds *reward, on conviction of any of the offenders in the above forgery.*

He appears about fifty years of age, about five feet six inches high, ſtout made, very ſallow complexion, dark eyes and eye-brows, ſpeaks in general very deliberately, with a foreign accent; has worn a black patch over his left eye, tied with a ſtring round his head, ſometimes wears a white wig, his hat flapped before, and nearly ſo at the ſides, a brown camblet great coat, buttons of the ſame, with a large cape, which he always wears ſo as to cover the lower part of his face; appears to have very thick legs, which hang over his ſhoes, as if ſwelled, his ſhoes are very broad at the toes, and little narrow old faſhioned ſilver buckles, black ſtocking breeches, walks with a ſhort crutch ſtick with an ivory head, ſtoops, or affects to ſtoop very much, and walks ſlow as if infirm; he has lately hired many hackney coaches in different parts of the town, and been frequently ſet down in or near Portland-place, in which neighbourhood it is ſuppoſed he lodges.

He is connected with a woman who anſwers the following deſcription:——She is rather tall, and genteel, thin face and perſon, about thirty years of age, light hair, rather a yellow caſt on her face, and pitted

pitted with the ſmall pox, a down-caſt look, ſpeaks very ſlow, ſometimes wears a coloured linen jacket and petticoat, and ſometimes a white one, a ſmall black bonnet, and a black cloak, and aſſumes the character of a lady's maid.

N. B. It is ſaid that about fifteen months ſince, he lodged at Mrs. Parker's, No. 40, *in Great Titchfield-ſtreet, (who is ſince dead) at which time he went by the name of* Wigmore.

The above advertiſement drove Mr. Price to his wits:—it forced him, for a time, to refrain from the circulation, and for ſome months put a total ſtop to it. The next lottery ſeaſon he recommenced his ſchemes, and Mr. PATCH again came forth with all his ſecret eclat, notwithſtanding every ſcheme that ingenuity could deviſe to detect them had been practiſed.

It is not unworthy obſervation, that hand-bills were delivered from houſe to houſe throughout the whole of the quarter where he was moſt ſuſpected to reſide, and at the very houſe which he daily

daily reſorted to, and where all his implements were fixed. This was the neighbourhood of Marybone, Portland-place, Oxford-ſtreet, and Tottenham-court-road; nay it was thrown down an area to the only perſon in whom he placed any confidence, a lady whom the reader will be preſently acquainted with. By theſe means Price was apprized of his immediate danger, and conſequently took his meaſures accordingly;—in the common phraſe, it blew him up, but it certainly was the means that prevented his then being apprehended. Eagerneſs to ſecure, baniſhed that foreſight and caution which are ever neceſſary whenever it is in purſuit of artful villainy. The animal, whoſe ſagacity is a proverb, can never be ſecured in haſte; to entrap him requires ſuperior patience, caution, and cunning.

In the preceding part of this narrative, we mentioned that Mr. Price had no partner, no perſon to whom he intruſted any branch of the buſineſs of forging a bank note: we mean by that, that he employed no mechanic to aſſiſt him; but a confident he moſt aſſuredly had, and a female, who was ſelected for the buſineſs with as much wiſdom, as he diſcovered ſagacity in his projects. It is no leſs extraordinary than true, that this confidante was his own wife's aunt, by the mother's ſide, with whom he had had a long and perfect intimacy, previous to his marriage with Mrs. Price. Her name is Pounteney; and what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, he carried on the connection till the day of his death, unknown to his wife: was daily with her, divided his dinner-

times

times equally between the two, and the niece had, for ten years paſt, through the impoſitions of her huſband, conſidered her aunt either as dead, or reſiding abroad. For this deception we ſhall account hereafter; one thing we muſt here obſerve, the wife was all innocence, without art, or underſtanding in the ways of the world, to be what is commonly called cunning, but, perhaps, had a little reaſon to be jealous. In ſhort ſhe was perfect ſimplicity, and, in her juvenile days, was diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of the pretty idiot —He prudently, therefore, thought her not fit to be truſted. Mrs. Pounteney, the aunt, was a character extremely oppoſite to that of her niece; ſhe was really cunning, artful, and capable of executing any plan which Price would chalk out for her. In ſhort, ſhe was the woman after Price's own heart, and having had the judgment to ſelect her for his operations, there is no wonder, under the tutelage of Mr. Price, ſhe proved a juſtification of his choice. It is eaſy, therefore, to be diſcovered why Mrs. Price was not thought by him a fit object to be truſted with ſo important a ſecret. As he perfectly knew ſhe was too fond of her filthy bargain, he wiſely judged that a want of underſtanding in a pretty woman is a certain proof of the want of a neceſſary reſervation, and that he ought to be equally apprehenſive of her fondneſs and ſimplicity, in a caſe where his own life was immediately concerned. Having made choice of this woman as an aſſiſtant, his apparatus being all ready, he began his operations, living then at Paddington with

Mrs. Price, whom he went to nightly, and having lodgings alſo near *Portland-place*, where he daily viſited her aunt, and where all the utenſils for his undertakings were concealed. Every thing being thus prepared, his next and chief ſcheme was a negociator; for this his wits were ſet to work, and he procured one in the following manner.

Previous to the commencement of the lottery for the year 1780, *Mr. Price* put an advertiſement into the Daily Advertiſer, in which he required a ſervant who had been uſed to live with a ſingle gentleman, and the direction was to C. C. *Marlborough ſtreet Coffee-houſe, Broad Street, Carnaby-Market*. An honeſt young man, who at that time lived with a muſical inſtrument maker in the Strand, whoſe name for very obvious reaſons we keep ſecret, not being much wanted by his maſter, and having been deſired by that maſter to look into the papers for a place, happening to read *Mr. Price*'s advertiſement, he ſent a letter to the *Marlborough ſtreet Coffee-houſe*, as directed. He heard nothing further of this for a week, when one evening, juſt as it was duſk, a coachman enquired for the man who had anſwered the advertiſement, ſaying there was a gentleman over the way in a coach wanted to ſpeak with him. On this, the young fellow was called, and went to the coach, where he was deſired to ſtep in. There he ſaw an apparent old man, affecting the foreigner, gouty, wrapped up with five or ſix yards of flannel about his legs, a camblet ſurtout buttoned up over his chin, cloſe to his mouth, a large *patch* over his left eye, and every part of his face ſo hid, that the young fellow could not ſee any part of it, except his noſe, his right eye, and a ſmall part of that cheek. To carry on the deception ſtill better, Mr. Price thought proper to place the man on his left ſide, on which eye the patch was, ſo that the old gentleman could

take an aſkaunce look at the young man with his right eye, and diſcover only a ſmall portion of his face. He appeared, by this diſguiſe to be between ſixty and ſeventy years of age; and afterwards, when the man ſaw him ſtanding, not much under ſix feet high, owing to boots or ſhoes, with heels very little leſs than four inches high. Added to this deception, he was ſo buttoned up and ſtraightened as to appear perfectly lank.

It may not be here ill-timed to thoſe who did not know him, to give the true deſcription of his perſon. He was about five feet ſix inches high, and a compact neat-made man, rather ſquare ſhouldered, and ſomewhat inclined to corpulency. His legs were firm and well ſet, but by nature, his features made him look much older than he really was, which was *fifty-five*. His noſe was aqualine and his eyes ſmall and grey; his mouth ſtood very much inwards, with very thin lips, his chin pointed and prominent, with a pale complexion; but what contributed as much as any thing to favour his diſguiſe of ſpeech, was his loſs of teeth. He walked exceedingly upright, was very active and quick in his walk, and was, what we deſcribe a man to be, when we call him *a dapper made man.*

To this perſon, whoſe Chriſtian name was *Samuel*, *Mr. Price* affected great age, much bodily infirmity, a faint hectic cough, with a diſability of almoſt getting out of the coach. *Samuel* having been ſeated by the ſide of *Mr. Price*, was told he was not wanted by him, *Price*, but as an under ſervant to a young nobleman of great fortune, under age, and then in the country, naming Bedfordſhire, to whom he was, and had been ſome years guardian. *Price* then began to enquire into the particulars of *Samuel*'s life, of which having beeen informed, and finding him a young fellow fit for the purpoſe, honeſt and ingenuous,

talked

talked to him about wages, and *Samuel* enquired whether he was to be in livery or not. To this, *Mr. Price* replied, that he could not really tell, for the young nobleman was a very whimſical character, and that was a circumſtance which might be ſettled hereafter. To carry on the farce, he deſired *Samuel* to call his maſter to the coach to give him a character, which being done and the gentleman giving him ſuch a one as *Price* pretended to approve of, a bargain was ſtruck for 18s. per week, and a direction given to call on Mr. *Brank*, *Price*'s aſſumed name, at No. 39, Titchfield-ſtreet, Oxford-ſtreet.

Purſuant to the appointment, which was the ſecond or third evening after, Samuel went to Titchfield-ſtreet, there ſaw this guardian of a minor nobleman, whom Samuel was to ſerve, by waiting on Mr. *Brank*. At this place, *Price* reſumed his diſcourſe reſpecting his ward, the whimſicalneſs of his character, the prodigality of his ways, and the hard taſk he had to prevent him from ſquandering his money away, eſpecially in dabbling with thoſe deceitful allurances, called *Lottery Tickets*. That, although he was a guardian to the nobleman, he was ſtill obliged to comply with thoſe whims, againſt his own inclination, and in oppoſition to all advice and remonſtrance. Old *Brank* boaſted of the happy proſpects for *Samuel* by ſerving ſuch a maſter, and *Samuel* talked of his wages and cloaths, and whether he was to be in livery or not? It was concluded, however, that for the preſent he ſhould procure a drab coat, turned up with red, till the nobleman's pleaſure was known, or he came to town. This converſation affords a fine picture of art and ſimplicity, and leads to a circumſtance very well worth

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talked

talked to him about wages, and *Samuel* enquired whether he was to be in livery or not. To this, *Mr. Price* replied, that he could not really tell, for the young nobleman was a very whimſical character, and that was a circumſtance which might be ſettled hereafter. To carry on the farce, he deſired *Samuel* to call his maſter to the coach to give him a character, which being done and the gentleman giving him ſuch a one as *Price* pretended to approve of, a bargain was ſtruck for 18s. per week, and a direction given to call on Mr. *Brank*, *Price*'s aſſumed name, at No. 39, Titchfield-ſtreet, Oxford-ſtreet.

Purſuant to the appointment, which was the ſecond or third evening after, Samuel went to Titchfield-ſtreet, there ſaw this guardian of a minor nobleman, whom Samuel was to ſerve, by waiting on Mr. *Brank*. At this place, *Price* reſumed his diſcourſe reſpecting his ward, the whimſicalneſs of his character, the prodigality of his ways, and the hard taſk he had to prevent him from ſquandering his money away, eſpecially in dabbling with thoſe deceitful allurances, called *Lottery Tickets*. That, although he was a guardian to the nobleman, he was ſtill obliged to comply with thoſe whims, againſt his own inclination, and in oppoſition to all advice and remonſtrance. Old *Brank* boaſted of the happy proſpects for *Samuel* by ſerving ſuch a maſter, and *Samuel* talked of his wages and cloaths, and whether he was to be in livery or not ? It was concluded, however, that for the preſent he ſhould procure a drab coat, turned up with red, till the nobleman's pleaſure was known, or he came to town. This converſation affords a fine picture of art and ſimplicity, and leads to a circumſtance very well worth

regarding—*Samuel* was ordered to get the cloaths at his own charge, and make out his bill—which he did, but was never repaid. This conduct exactly corresponded with Price's character, who never was known to part with a ſhilling out of one hand, till he had half a guinea for it in the other. A circumſtance muſt be obſerved here alſo: Samuel was placed on the left ſide of the old gentleman, on which ſide the patch was, ſo that during the whole of the converſation, Samuel could never ſee the right ſide of the old gentleman's face.

Samuel having taken his leave of the old gentleman, was ordered to come again in the evening of the firſt day of the drawing of the lottery. Mr. Price had alſo pretended, that he ſeldom went to the nobleman's town houſe of an evening, and therefore in order to avoid giving Samuel unneceſſary trouble, he was ordered to come to the ſame place. On that evening Samuel punctually attended, and then Mr. Price pulled out a variety of papers, letters, &c. and told Samuel he had received orders from the thoughtleſs young nobleman to purchaſe lottery tickets, as a venture againſt his coming to town, and in that buſineſs he meant to employ Samuel. For this purpoſe, he produced ſome ſeeming bank notes, and gave Samuel two, one of 20l. the other of 40l. He alſo directed him to take the number and dates of them on a piece of paper, for fear of loſing them, and to go to a lottery office in the Hay-market, and with the one of 20l. to purchaſe *an eight guinea chance:* from thence he was to go to the corner of Bridge-ſtreet, Weſtminſter, to buy another out of the 40l. note, and wait at the door of the Parliament-ſtreet Coffee-houſe till Mr. Brank came

came to him. With theſe notes, Samuel went to the Haymarket and bought the eight guinea chance with the 20l. note, having got the balance he went to the corner of Bridge-ſtreet, and bought another with the 40l. note, purſuant to directions; and was going to the Parliament-ſtreet Coffee-houſe to meet his maſter, when, from the oppoſite ſide of the way, he was hailed by him, complimented on his ſpeed, and informed that he had been ſo quick, that he, Brank, had not had time to get to the Coffee-houſe. He was then interrogated if he had made the purchaſes, and replying in the affirmative, he was again commended for his diligence. Brank alſo enquired if any miſtake had happened; and all this with a deal of coughing, imbecility of ſpeech, and feigned accent.

We forgot to mention, that when Samuel received the notes, he received alſo as many canvas bags, as he was ordered to buy ſhares, or chances, and to put every diſtinct ſhare, and the balance coming out of each note, into a ſeparate bag, for fear, as his maſter ſaid the chance of one office might be confuſed with the chance of another, and *Samuel* thereby puzzled to know where he had bought the different chances; as by ſuch confuſion, or forgetfulneſs, it might not be recollected where to apply, in caſe of a fortunate number.

Mr. *Brank* having then ſecured the chances and balances, *Samuel* was ordered to go to *Goodluck*'s at Charing-croſs, from thence to King-ſtreet, Covent Garden; and York-ſtreet, Covent Garden, and purchaſe ſome ſmall ſhares and chances, and to meet his maſter at the City Coffee-houſe, Cheapſide. To all theſe places he went,

went, and having bought his numbers, and changed his notes; as he was going along York-ſtreet, his maſter called to him from a coach, pretended he was fortunate in thus ſeeing him, made *Samuel* ſtep in, got the produce of the forgery, and away they drove to the city.

In their way thither, *Brank* applauded his new ſervant's diſpatch, and gave him more notes, to the amount of 400l. with inſtructions to purchaſe a variety of ſhares and chances, at different offices about the *Exchange*; and directed him, as before, to put the chances belonging to each office in a ſeparate bag. *Samuel* having got out of the coach in Cheapſide, left his employer in the carriage, and executed his commiſſions with punctuality and ſucceſs: he then returned agreeable to his orders, to the City Coffee-houſe, where he had waited but a few minutes before Mr. *Brank* came hobling up to him, and took him into a coach that was waiting hard by. *Brank* then began complaining of his health and his infirmities, obſerving, that the fatigues of buſineſs had kept him longer than he expected; but warned *Samuel* to be always exceeding punctual. Price's reaſon for this punctuality was the dread of a diſcovery, and to prevent conſultations by which he might be detected. In the courſe of their journey to the end of *Long Acre*, where the coachman was ordered to drive, *Brank* endeavoured to amuſe his ſervant with flattering promiſes for his attention and fidelity; and at the time of parting with him, even put a guinea into his hand; but whether it was given with a judicious deſign, or whether it was in conſequence of a momentary impulſe of generoſity, for his having been fortunate enough to tranſmute his counterfeit Bank paper into

into real gold, we will not positively determine, though a tolerable opinion may be formed from this fact; that it was the only money poor *Sam* ever was paid, although he had then obtained cash, and other valid securities, to the amount of fourteen hundred pounds, on those forged notes. In this affair and cloaths he had expended seven pounds for his master's use. On parting in *Long Acre*, *Sam* was ordered to be in waiting, for a few days at his old masters in the Strand. As this plan was the routine of his employment it will only be necessary now to inform our readers, that, when ever *Samuel* went into an office, a woman, unobserved by him, always walked in, at the same time looked about her, as if accompanying some body who was in the shop, and as soon as *Samuel* had done his business, the lady likewise walked out.—This woman now proves to have been Mrs. Pounteney, the aunt of Price's wife, described in the advertisement and hand-bill issued by the Bank. This lady always accompanied Price in a coach whenever he went out, and stuck close to Samuel at every office. As soon as he had safely got out, stepped across the way to Price, who was in the coach, informed him of the success, and then Samuel was hailed, and the property secured by Price, for fear the servant might play the master a trick, and decamp with the booty, Mrs. Pounteney always keeping out of sight, nor did Samuel ever see her during his servitude to Mr. Brank. From Titchfield-street, and during his whole residence there, which was but a week, Price always appeared and went out as Brank; and Mrs. Pounteney always accompanied him, ready to receive the disguise, in case of any accidental discovery; so that if ne-

cessity

ceſſity required it, he was inſtantly ſhifted from Brank to Price, and Price to Brank, and thereby Samuel rendered incapable of ſaying, "*That was the man that had employed him.*" We return now to the narrative: On the next Sunday morning, a coachman came and enquired for Samuel; the maſter informed the coachman, that though Sam worked, he not did lodge there and that he ſhould not ſee him till the next morning. The coachman held a parcel in his hand, which he ſaid was for Samuel, which the maſter deſired him to leave, and he ſhould have it the next day. The coachman replied, he was ordered not to leave it, but to take it back in caſe he could not ſee the man, and accordingly went acroſs the way with it. There the maſter ſaw the elderly gentleman, with whom he had converſed on Samuel's character a few days before, to whom the coachman delivered the parcel, and ſaw him get into a coach, but in a minute the coachman returned and left it This parcel contained notes to the amount of 300l. with a letter directing him to buy, on the next morning, a ſixteenth, an eight-guinea chance, and a whole ticket; to repeat his purchaſes at different offices, with the uſual precautions, till the whole were changed, and to meet his maſter, Mr. Brank, at Mill's Coffee-houſe, Gerrard-ſtreet, Soho, at twelve o'clock the next day. Samuel having followed the directions, and ſucceeded, he went to meet his maſter as ordered. On enquiry at the Coffee-houſe, he found that no ſuch man had been there; but in a few minutes, as he was ſtanding at the Coffee-houſe door, a coachman came up to him and told him, a Gentleman at the corner of Macclesfield-ſtreet, wanted to ſpeak withh im;

on

on this Samuel went and found his maſter, Brank, in a coach, who ordered him to come in, and made him ſit on the left hand, as before deſcribed, that Samuel could only ſee the *patch-ſide* of his maſter's face. The tickets, ſhares, chances, and balances having been delivered, Mr. Brank ordered his ſervant to bid the coachman drive towards Hampſtead, and, in the way, he gave Samuel three ſixteenths as a reward for his care and diligence. He now talked much of his ward, and ſaid, he would be in town in a day or two, and that he would ſpeak highly of Samuel's induſtry. On theſe ſubjects Brank preached till they reached Mother Black-Cap's, Kentiſh Town, and then Samuel was bid to order the coachman to turn round. In their way back, Samuel had freſh notes given him to the amount of 500l. with the ſame directions, to lay them out in the ſame manner about the 'Change, and to meet his maſter at the ſame place in the evening, where Mr. Brank ſaid he ſhould dine; but now Samuel was ordered not to diſpoſe of theſe notes at the ſame offices he had done the others, and the reaſon for this need not be explained.

Samuel performed this taſk alſo, and juſt as he got up to the Coffee-houſe door, a porter accoſted him, and conducted him to his maſter, who was in a coach a little way off. *Samuel* was now blamed for his delay, a feigned anger aſſumed, with a declaration, that he would not do if not punctual, that he had exceeded his time, and that the nobleman was very particular in time, even to a minute. *Samuel* apologized, *Brank* got hold of the caſh, &c. and then ordered him to go forwardto the *New Inn Weſtminſter Bridge* and hire a poſt chaiſe to carry them to *Greenwich* to meet the nobleman's

ſteward, who was alſo his banker, and to whom he was going for more money to purchaſe more tickets; making, at the ſame time, ſeveral obſervations on the imprudence and prodigality of his ward.

When they came to Greenwich, *Samuel* was ordered to go to the *Ship* and prepare a dinner, while *Brank* pretended to be negociating his buſineſs; and inſtructed him alſo, not to wait longer than three o'clock, but go to dinner, at that time, if he, *Brank*, did not return.

At half paſt four o'clock *Brank* came hobling, coughing, and ſeemingly quite out of breath with fatigue—They drank tea together, at the Ship, and afterwards returned to town in the chaiſe; but here it ſhould be obſerved, that Sam was the paymaſter for his dinner and pleaſures of the day, under pretence of his maſter having no change.

From Greenwich they drove to Lombard-ſtreet, and then diſcharged the chaiſe. There Sam received more notes to the amount of 350l. which he got rid of in his uſual way; and at the City Coffee-houſe was again fortunate enough to meet his maſter before he got to the door. He was then ordered to attend the next evening at his maſter's lodgings, which he accordingly did, and by order three or four times after, in the courſe of which he negociated 500l. more in the ſame manner.

In negociating the laſt ſum which Samuel received, he viſited Brookſbank's and Ruddle's. Here he was interrogated whom he lived with, &c. and in this converſation honeſt Samuel ſaid he was ſervant to a very rich nobleman's guardian, that he was at board-wages, and gave his addreſs to his old maſter, the muſical inſtrument-

maker,

maker. Having delivered to his maſter, Brank, the cash, &c. in the uſual way, he was told, that perhaps he might not be wanted again for a week, and that he might wait till ſent for. Before the expiration of that week, however, Samuel was apprehended, and conducted to Bow-ſtreet, examined by the Magiſtrates and Gentlemen of the Bank, where he told his artleſs tale, but to which no credit was given, and he was committed to Tothilfields Bridewell, on ſuſpicion of having counterfeited the notes of the Bank of England.

The aſtoniſhment of the ſervant on his apprehenſion, the dread he was in of being executed as a forger of counterfeit Bank notes, the horror of being confined in a priſon, which to Samuel, was perfectly a new ſcene, and the impoſſibility of his giving any clue, whereby the old impoſtor could be ſecured, muſt form in the mind of the reader, a combination of ideas which would be impoſſible for us to deſcribe. Certain it is, the directors of the Bank and the Magiſtrates, were equally aſtoniſhed at the ſagacity of the manufacturer, who had, hitherto, by the moſt artful of all deceptions, evaded every poſſibility of detection. Nor could they be at all ſatisfied of honeſt Sam's innocence, although his ſtory was, in part, confirmed by his former maſter. It is evident alſo, they either paid little credit to his ſtory, or, they thought, by keeping him in cuſtody, the legality of which is not the preſent queſtion, to be able, thereby, to arrive at ſome information, which would throw a light on the forger. Whatever were their motives they humanely provided for him, and that circumſtance ſoftened his captivity, which otherwiſe muſt have made his ſituation truly deplorable.

Samuel being thus in the hands of the Magiſtrates, it is neceſſary to inform the reader that the forged note he had paſſed at Brookſbank's and Ruddle's, where he had been interrogated, was the means of his apprehenſion. That note in a day or two got to the Bank, was traced back to that office, and immediate application being made to Bow-ſtreet, Samuel was ſoon paid a viſit by Sir S. Wright and Mr. Bond. And thus it was, that the old gentleman *below*, who had hitherto been on very familiar terms with the old gentleman *above*, played off one of his cuſtomary ill humours for a moment, had forſaken his friend, and thereby put a temporary period to his progreſs; for it is evident that matters of this kind cannot be effected without the firſt mentioned gentleman's conſtant attendance.

Samuel's examinations were long and frequent, and the whole of the tranſactions taken as minutely as we have ſtated them. The ſcheme laid to ſecure Mr. Brank was as follows. Samuel had been ordered by Brank to ſtay till he was ſent for, and an inferior officer of Bow-ſtreet was ſtationed at the ſhop in the Strand, where Samuel worked, in caſe he ſhould call in the mean time. A few days elapſed, when Samuel received a meſſage to meet his maſter the next day at Mills's Coffee-houſe, exactly at eleven o'clock. The plan was accordingly concerted. Samuel was ordered by Mr. Bond not to go till five minutes paſt the time; the above inferior officer attending at a diſtance, diſguiſed as a porter, with a knot on his ſhoulder, and Mr. Bond, dreſſed as a lady, followed at a ſmall diſtance. When Samuel came to the Coffee-houſe, he found that

a real

real porter had that inſtant been there, and enquired for ſuch a perſon, in ſuch a livery, and could have been hardly got out of the door. This information Samuel directly communicated to the *lady*, and Samuel was ſent back to wait; but the aforeſaid old gentleman *below*, who who had been taking a bit of a nap in the mean time; and had, luckily for the old gentleman *above*, waked in an exceeding good humour, was determined to be too many for their mutual enemy; for, having ſeated himſelf by the ſide of his friend Brank, in a hackney coach hard by, he diſcovered, in the manner he did to the young ſtudent at Madrid, the aforeſaid momentary converſation between Samuel and the ſaid diſguiſed perſons. Both the old gentlemen, therefore, took immediate flight, and hugged and careſſed each other on this fortunate diſcovery, leaving Samuel, the *inferior officer*, and the *lady*, as cruelly diſappointed as the ſaid two gentlemen were highly pleaſed at the eſcape. The reader, we hope, will not be offended at this imitation of Old Harry,—we mean FIELDING, who never was more ſevere upon vice, than when he treated it ludicrouſly. To return: an inſtant *ruſh* was made at Titchfield-ſtreet, but in vain; they found that Brank had never been there ſince Samuel and he had left it together; and, as a ſmack of Scrub's account of Archer and Aimwell, they did not know who he was, where he came from, or whither he was going. The advertiſements again ſhone forth, the hand bills were ſhowered around, but all in vain; norwas Brank ever heard of till the next Lottery and Chriſtmas times. Poor Samuel, however, ſtill lay in durance vile, but his innocence being tolerably

tolerably eſtabliſhed, he was, after having been robbed of ſeven pounds odd by his maſter, and ſuffering eleven months impriſonment, diſcharged with a preſent of *twenty pounds*.

The enſuing Lottery, *Price* played the ſame game with the ſame effect, but, artfully, with notes of higher value, for 20l. and 40l. were grown too ſuſpicious—another lad got himſelf into cuſtody—another *ruſh* was made, and *Price* miſſed again by a moment.

His next ſcheme was an advertiſement for a perſon in the linen drapery buſineſs, and with notes of 50l. up to a 100l. two agents purchaſed linen drapery at different ſhops. Theſe two young fellows were likewiſe detected by having paſſed an 100l note at Mr. *Woollerton's*, linen draper in *Oxford-ſtreet*, who was fortunate enough to recover the whole of his property back, which Mr. Bond had ſeized at No. 3, on the *Terrace*, in *Tottenham-court road*. In ſhort, to follow *Mr. Price* for ſix years, through all his proceedings, would be impoſſible; the account would ſwell to a folio volume—ſuffice it to ſay, he had 45 different names, 45 different diſguiſes, and 45 different lodgings; but that this was HIS *unfortunate number!*

His various deceptions in the circulation of forged notes, now becoming highly dangerous, he turned his thoughts to a new ſpecies equally artful, and for a time equally ſucceſsful.

Still in diſguiſe, he went to the Coffee-houſes about 'Change—got a boy to take 10l. to the Bank, giving him directions to the teller, who gives the cuſtomary ticket to the caſhier who pays; this ticket the lad had orders, inſtead of purſuing the teller's direction, to the caſhier, as

is uſual, when out of ſight of the teller, to turn round another way, and bring the ticket back to the Coffee-houſe. There he uſed to alter the tickets from 10l. to 100l. by adding an 0, or a 1 to any other ſum where the addition was eaſy and might puzzle the teller, as from 50 to 150, &c. and then ſend it by another hand, to the caſhier, who paid it unſuſpectingly.

This ſcheme was his laſt, and he practiſed it, till having received a Bank note which he paſſed at Mr. Aldous's, a Pawn-broker in *Berwick-ſtreet*, as we at firſt ſaid, he was there apprehended.

This note had had many indorſements, and Price having diſguiſed ſeveral of them, by additions to the names; and his friend, the aforeſaid *old* GENTLEMAN, not being then at his elbow probably then engaged in ſome other equally honourable employ, Mr. Price left one indorſement ſtanding entire. This led to Mr. Aldous's, who knew him by the name of Powel, where he came two or three times a week, had pledged things of great value, and whoſe reſidence Mr. Aldous could never find out, although he cauſed him to be frequently followed.

An officer was then, by Mr. Clarke's direction placed there till he came, which was the next day but one, when he was amuſed and kept in converſation till Mr. Clarke's arrival, who ſecured and brought him to *Bow-ſtreet*.

Theſe ſuſpicions were almoſt *tantamount* to proof, of his being the celebrated Mr. Patch, which name he got from the *patch over his eye*. Thus were the gentlemen of the Bank made happy in the detection of ſo dangerous an offender, and the only diſcovery they had now to make, which

which was of the utmoſt importance, was, where the female companion and implements were concealed, and which, by a manœuvre of Mr. Clarke's, were diſcovered, but not till after his death——this we ſhall relate in turn. His behaviour, when firſt in cuſtody, was exceedingly inſolent—Mr. Bond, who during Price's reſidence in King-ſtreet Covent-Garden, was clerk at Bow ſtreet, had viſited him on account of ſome money due to Sir John Fielding's maid ſervant, gained by inſuring with Price—He had refuſed the payment to the ſervant, not knowing with whom ſhe lived, but when he was informed who the girls maſter was, he waited on Sir John, and at laſt, but very reluctantly paid the money. When taken to Bow ſtreet, he taxed Mr. Bond, who is now a magiſtrate, with prejudice againſt him on account of the old affair, and complained that he ſhould not have juſtice done him. He laid the ſame accuſation againſt Abraham Newland, Eſq. principal caſhier of the Bank, who he ſaid would do him every poſſible injury, on account of ſome former antipathy that gentleman had conceived to him. Thus conſcious of his own guilt, he imputed revenge to every gentleman who either performed the duty of making him amenable to the laws of his country, or, who ſtood forward even officially, to further the calls of juſtice.

One thing we muſt not omit to mention; when he was under examination, Sir Sampſon Wright, ſuddenly called out Sam, who ſtood behind Price; Sam anſwered, and appeared to his old maſter, who ſtarted as at a ghoſt; but recollecting himſelf, he aſſumed his old *congee*, and made a polite bow to his old ſervant, no doubt either to awaken his

humanity, or hint at what he might expect if he diſclaimed him. The fact was, Samuel could only ſwear to his voice, but could not have the leaſt idea of his perſon or features.—Being then committed to Tothilfields Bridewell, he turned his thoughts, naturally enough, to the deſtruction of the implements. Well knowing that nothing could be got out of Mrs. Price, or any of his family, to affect him, he made no ſcruple of declaring, when under examination, that his lodgings were at a Cheeſemonger's in the neighbourhood of Tottenham-Court Road; equally ſecure, that nothing could be found there, to afford the leaſt ſuſpicion of his being the forger deſcribed under the character of Patch. Determined to deſtroy every thing that could lend the leaſt aſſiſtance to that diſcovery, he ſent for Mrs. Price and his eldeſt ſon, a fine youth about fifteen years of age, and then, to her great ſurpriſe, communicated to her thoſe lodgings, and the circumſtances reſpecting her aunt.

By the ſon he ſent a letter to Mrs. Pounteney, informing her of his ſituation, deſiring her inſtantly to deſtroy every atom of the apparatus, clothes, &c. To get this letter ſafe out of priſon, he had recourſe to an expedient as artful as it was ſucceſsful. He told his ſon, that it was often the cuſtom of the keepers of priſons to ſearch the perſons of viſitors to priſoners; and as he was charged with an offence, to detect which he had every expedient to dread, his own ſafety required him to have recourſe to equal ſtratagems to fruſtrate their deſigns. Accordingly, having wrote the letter, he deſired his ſon to take off his ſhoe, which being done, Mr. Price tore up the inner ſole, and under it put the letter to Mrs. P——, with this injunction, that if he ſhould be aſked any queſtions at

the gate, whether he had any thing from his father to carry any where, to ſay no; if they attempted to ſearch him, to ſubmit to the ſearch quietly, and with temper. This contrivance, and theſe directions, ſeem to have been the reſult of a knowledge of the practice of priſons, and which no Newgate bird could have ſchemed better to have defeated. We do not indeed know, nor have we heard, that he was ever before confined for felony; he was often in cuſtody for debt, and two or three times confined in the King's Bench priſon; but there, ſuch ſecret conveyances are unneceſſary, and he could not derive his knowledge from any other ſource than ſuſpicions founded upon hearſay, and what his own good ſenſe dictated to him. Thus prudent and thus guarded, in his conveyance of a letter to the very perſon, whom the Bank of England would have given any ſum to diſcover, the manœuvre had its effect, and the letter reached the aunt in ſafety. The reaſon why the gentlemen of the Bank were ſo ſolicitous to diſcover the abode of this woman is evident. They knew that wherever ſhe was, the dangerous engines were; that to get at her, would have been getting into poſſeſſion of all that was ſo deſtructive to the community, and therefore the deſtruction of them was, naturally enough, the firſt object of their hearts.

We muſt here, for a while, leave Mr. Price in his confinement, and accompany the letter to Mrs. Pounteney. This ſhrewd woman, on the receipt of the letter, with an admirable preſence of mind, came down into the kitchen where the maid was, and mildly blamed her for keeping ſo ſmall a fire in ſuch cold weather. She ordered her to take the checks out of the grate, and throw on freſh coals; which being done, and the fire beginning to be ſomewhat high, ſhe artfully old the

maid

maid ſhe had received a letter from her maſter, who was gone abroad, informing her that the clothes he had lately worn, he had diſcovered to be infeſted by the plague, contracted during the time of his being laſt out of England; and that he had ordered her to burn the whole of them immediately, for fear of the infection ſpreading, and endangering the lives of all in the houſe.

She accordingly brought down every article of clothes which Mr. Price had concealed himſelf in, under the character of Patch, and laying them on a heap on the kitchen floor, took a cullender and ſprinkled them with water till they were ſufficiently damp to prevent their blazing. When this was done, ſhe put them on the fire, and as ſoon as they began to blaze again, took them off, turned and watered them afreſh, laying the unburnt part downwards. This ſhe continued till the whole were conſolidated into a cake, and by that means reduced every atom to a powder. Thus with a preſence of mind, and a dexterity unparallelled in ſuch an extremity, let what would come to paſs, whatever could affect him as *Mr. Price*, nothing could then diſcover him by dreſs, in the character of *Patch*.

Having thus effected one principal end of the letter, ſhe then turned her thoughts to the other—the deſtruction of the materials with which Mr. Price had ſo induſtriouſly carried on his ingenious practices. The ſervant had a ſiſter living in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Price having had occaſion once or twice for a carpenter, through the medium of this ſiſter, one had been employed by Mrs. Pounteney, but to whom Price had never been viſible. She therefore ordered the ſervant to go for that carpenter, in order to take down the wood-frame, preſſes, inſtruments, &c. with which Price had made his paper, and printed off his notes from the

plates, all which were exactly fitted up in the mode and manner of a copper-plate printer's materials. While the maid was out for the carpenter, Mrs. Pounteney took the copper-plates, &c. put them into the fire, and when thoroughly burnt through, and red hot, took them out, and let them lay till they were cool, whereby they were reduced to a pliability capable of being twiſted, and broke with eaſe. Having effected this, ſhe reduced them to very ſmall pieces, and with a large bundle of ſmall wires, with which Mr. Price had manufactured the paper and water-marks, gave them to the ſon, deſiring him to take them to the duſt-heaps behind the houſes, in the adjacent fields, and there diſtribute them from heap to heap, kicking the duſt over the pieces as he diſtributed them, in order to prevent them from being ſeen by thoſe, whoſe occupations daily lead them to the duſt heaps; and alſo, if ſeen, they might not be found in ſuch parcels, as to occaſion a ſurpriſe, or future enquiry. The lad having obeyed his great aunt in theſe particulars, the remains of theſe plates lay there, till, by a ſtratagem of Mr. Clarke's, they were found and brought to Bow-ſtreet by duſtmen, who could have no idea of their uſe, and rewarded as promiſed by Mr. Clarke. The carpenter having taken down the apparatus, and being paid for his trouble, was diſpatched; every thing then was brought down, and reduced to aſhes, ſo that hardly any thing remained a body, but the bits of plates and wires, which could not be reduced.

The ſtep Mr. Clarke took after Price's death, to find out Mrs. Pounteney and the implements, had its effect. Mrs. Price, who, as we have before ſaid, was informed by her huſband of the place of Mrs. Pounteney's abode, diſcovered it. She was taken into cuſtody—ingenuouſly told every

every circumſtance from beginning to end, which were of a nature almoſt exceeding human belief. The frame with which he made the laſt bank notes was found at the houſe, and all the implements employed in making the paper, with the preſs for printing the notes, at a ſmith's in the neighbourhood, whither the carpenter who took them down had carried them by Mrs. Pounteney's direction. The whole of the myſtery diſcovered, the principal offender dead, the apparatus found and deſtroyed, and the gentlemen of the Bank fully ſatisfied that no accomplice lurked behind the curtain, not wiſhing to take the life of a woman away, have humanely diſcharged her; and, as well-wiſhers to the community, we hope her eſcape will teach her not to abuſe a lenity, which ſeems to have been founded on a miſtaken humanity.—Our opinion on this point is rather confirmed by this fact. On a ſecond ſearch, the frame with which Price made his paper was found, and being aſked by Mr. Clarke what it was, with an art and compoſure which proved her a perfect diſciple of her tutor's, replied, "It is an inſtrument I uſe for mangling."

We have now concluded our account of Mr. Price, from the time of his commencing his different ſchemes on the Bank, in the year 1780, to his laſt hour.

His natural aſſurance was exhibited in the following meaſure he took to try if he was even ſuſpected. He would go to the coffee-houſes about 'Change, appear as Price, enquire for Mr. Norton, write a letter, and leave it at the bar. In ten minutes he would come in again as Mr. Norton, take his own letter, drink his coffee, and away. A boy, who had two or three times taken his caſh to the teller, and that boy's mother, who had alſo ſeen him, were brought, by his attorney, to view him in priſon.

priſon. The boy could not identify him; the mother could, and, in ſpite of all that could be ſaid, perſiſted in her knowledge. We hear for a fact, they were both before the magiſtrate at Bow-ſtreet. Mr. Price had been three or four times brought up there, to be viewed only by the perſons who had taken forged notes of him in different diſguiſes;—the event was, he ſaw the impoſſibility of eſcaping the ſlow but ſure hand of juſtice. He told the keeper he had been *betrayed*, and the next morning was found hanging. The invention, the method, and the means he took, were of a piece with his uſual caution and deliberation. He informed his ſon, that the people of the priſon came into his room ſooner than he wiſhed: that, in his ſituation, he had ſomething ſecret to write, which they might get at by ſuddenly coming upon him; that he wiſhed to prevent it, and gave his ſon money to purchaſe two gimblets and a ſixpenny cord, pointing out to him how he would ſtick the gimblets in from poſt to poſt, and tie the cord acroſs the door, which opened inwards, and thereby prevent any perſon from coming in till he pleaſed to permit them. The ſcheme had its effect—he faſtened the two gimbleis under two hat-ſcrews, and thus, having four ſecurities to prevent his falling, he was found the next morning hanging without coat or ſhoes.

Under his waiſtcoat were found three papers.—One was a petition to the King, praying protection for his wife, and eight innocent children, all of whom, he ſaid, had never offended. In this petition he ſtated, that he had written a pamphlet with a view to prevent a war between the crowns of England and Denmark, and to reſcue the character of Queen Matilda from the baſe aſperſions of the Queen Dowager's party. The ſecond contained

tained the moſt warm and grateful thanks to Mr. Fenwick, the keeper of the priſon, for the many obligations he was under to him for his conſiſtent indulgence and favours, with a prayer that the Almighty would be his keeper, and reward him for it in due time. The laſt conſiſted of an affectionate leave of his wife—he begged her forgiveneſs for every injury he had done her, and intreated her attention to their offspring; concluding with a hope of their meeting in Heaven, where their preſent miſeries would have an end. One thing is obſervable:—In theſe papers, formed with conſideration, he moſt ſolemnly denied every thing. The Coroner's Inqueſt ſat on his body, and brought in their verdict *felo de ſe*, in conſequence of which he was buried in the croſs-road near the priſon, leading to Chelſea.

In juſtice to an individual, we ought not to omit mentioning, that as ſeveral news-papers have propagated a report that Mr. Price had borrowed of Mr. Aldous, a pawn-broker, whom we have before mentioned, a large ſervice of plate, and left bank-notes as a ſecurity for his returning it, we aſſure the reader that it is wholly falſe and groundleſs. Mr. Aldous took every ſtep in his power to diſcover the impoſtor, and was the principal perſon by whoſe aſſiſtance he was apprehended. He had pledged things of value ſeveral times there in the name of Powel—Mrs. Pounteney had been there on the ſame errand, as Mrs. Powel—had repreſented her huſband as having an important poſt at St. James's. They had talked each of the other, and each of them had pledged the ſame gold watch at different times. But on his apprehenſion he denied any knowledge of the woman, even to Mr. Aldous's face;—threatened his

appre-

apprehenders with actions;—ridiculed them for not finding, among others, a 10l. note which he had in his fob under his watch, and which he produced, although that identical note was one of the notes delivered by the caſhier upon one of the forged tickets. We mention theſe circumſtances to ſhew how weak and inefficacious is all the art and ſubtlety of man, when guilt is ſuddenly attacked.

As ſoon as the news of Price's death had reached Mr. Clarke's ears, he poſted to Mrs. Price. He informed her of the ſhocking event, and then urged her, as the laſt act of humanity ſhe could perform to her deceaſed huſband, to diſcover where the woman was with whom Mr. Price had been connected, and by this means her huſband might afterwards be ſuffered to have Chriſtian interment, although the verdict of the Coroner's inqueſt muſt be formally complied with.

The propoſal had its effect—tenderneſs to her huſband prevailed; her ſon, who was by, earneſtly implored his mother to tell, or ſuffer him to tell, who, and where the woman was. Mrs. Price conſented, and Mr. Clarke was directed to the houſe, where every thing was found that could give ſatisfaction to the gentlemen of the Bank, and a moſt important ſervice thereby done the community.

We cannot cloſe this unparallelled hiſtory without obſerving, that the body, which was buried purſuant to the ſentence, lay a week before it was taken away. From that circumſtance, as well as the manner in which it was taken, there is little room to doubt, but that, as his *life* was a *diſgrace* to ſociety, his *bones* are now an *ornament* in the rotunda of ſome anatomical exhibition, under which may be juſtly inſcribed, HIC NIGER EST.

As

As we have been favoured with the following curious ANECDOTES, ſince we concluded our account of Mr. Price, the obligation we are under to the gentleman, who favoured us with them, and a duty we owe the public for their encouragement of our labours, induces us to lay theſe remarkable facts before them. In order of time, they would have ſtood much better at the beginning, than at the latter end of this narrative; but, as we are authoriſed to make uſe of the gentleman's name, the reader, we hope, will ſee, that they ſerve, in this place, to wind up the hiſtory of this arch impoſtor, in the whole of which the ſtricteſt attention has been paid to truth.

In November 1782, Mr. Spilſbury, of Soho-ſquare, received a card in the name of WILMOT, which had been left by a perſon who had called at his houſe, in his abſence. The next evening Mr. Spilſbury received the following note:—

" Mr. Wilmott's complits to Mr. Spilſbur. wiſh-
" es to converſe with him 10 minutes. having an
" Order for His drops, at half paſt five o'clock
" this evening."
Greſſe-ſtreet, Rathbone-Place.

At the time appointed, Mr. Spilſbury waited on Mr. Wilmot in Greſſe-ſtreet. He was ſhewn into a parlour, by the foot-boy, and amuſed himſelf there about half an hour, before Mr. Wilmot made his appearance. On his entry, he appeared to be a very infirm old man, wrapt up in a great coat, with a ſloutched hat on, a piece of red flannel round the lower part of his face, with a large

buſh-wig, and legs wrapped over with flannel.—Added to this, he had a pair of green ſpectacles on his noſe, with a green ſilk ſhade hanging down from his hat, but no patch on his eye.

We muſt here inform our readers, that Mr. Spilſbury and Mr. Price knew each other perfectly well, had frequently met at Percy-ſtreet coffee-houſe, Rathbone-place, and often converſed together; but Mr. Spilſbury had no idea or recollection of the one in the other.

As ſoon as Mr. Wilmott came into the parlour, his firſt obſervation was on his own dreſs; and, as it may be ſafely ſaid, he never did one honeſt act, ſo it may be fairly concluded, he never told one truth in his life. For, as the neceſſity of lying ariſes from the ſituation of the liar, Price was always very aſſiduous in avoiding a ſtate, which would lay him under the unpleaſant taſk of telling a truth.—Conformably to this, he accounted thus for his flannel on his face. That he had exceedingly ſuffered in the drawing of a tooth by an unſkilful dentiſt, and wore it in order to prevent his catching cold. He then entered very familiarly into converſation with Mr. Spilſbury, extolled the merits of thoſe drops, which needed not his praiſe, and recounted the great cures they had performed. The reader will readily ſee the drift of this, without any comment of ours. Mr. Wilmott ſtiled himſelf a dealer in diamonds, and, after ſome ſhort converſation, Mr. Spilſbury departed, with the promiſe of an order in a few days. It muſt be alſo clear to every capacity, why Price did not chooſe to give the order immediately, for the delay was intended to ſtrengthen Mr. Spilſbury's opinion of him, and to wipe off all ſuſpicion of fraud.

In

In a few days after, Mr. Spilſbury received a ſecond note, which is as follows:—

" Mr. Wilmott's Compliments to Mr. Spilſbur, " deſires he will put up twelve bottles of drops, at " 3 s. 6 d. againſt Friday three o'clock. the " boy will call and pay for them. alſo, Mr. " Spilſbur will ſend a copy or form of an Adver- " tiſement—and atteſtation, leaving a Blank for " the Names. the caſe was—the man was violent- " ly broke out in legs, Body and face, and he actu- " ally had no other phyſic than two of the Bottles. " and it is really aſtoniſhing how much He is re- " covered.—when Mr. Wilmott comes to town " to-morrow week. He will ſend the voucher au- " thenticated by 6 people of Conſequence."

Greſſe-ſtreet, No. 17.

The boy did not come on the Friday, as mentioned, but that Friday week, with another note, in which Mr. Wilmot deſired Mr. Spilſbury to ſend two guineas worth of the drops, and change for a 10 l. bank-note. One circumſtance in the note we muſt not omit. Mr. Wilmott deſired Mr. Spilſbury to be particular in ſending guineas of good weight. The bank-note appeared to be a new one, and but lately come from the bank; and not the leaſt idea being entertained of its reality, change was got in the neighbourhood, and the drops ſent.

Mr. Spilſbury heard nothing further for ſome time, when he received a card from Sir S. Wright, deſiring his attendance at Bow-ſtreet, where he gave the whole of the particulars, produced the two foregoing letters, and to his aſtoniſhment was informed of the forgery. The note had got to the

bank, was ſtopped and traced back. The officers paid an immediate viſit to Mr. Wilmott, who had ſome time before taken care to quit Greſſe-ſtreet; and thus Mr. Price again eſcaped.

On this viſit, it fortunately fell out, that another gentleman, who had but juſt ſent in his goods, thereby ſaved them, though he was obliged to put up with the loſs of his caſh.

It happened not long after this, that Mr. Spilſbury and Mr. Price met at Percy-ſtreet coffee-houſe, and there, to complete this farce, if there can be any humour in extraordinary wickedneſs, a ſcene enſued, that, perhaps, has never been equalled by the moſt fertile faculty of inventive genius.

As they were drinking their chocolate, and talking over the occurrences of the day, Mr. Spilſbury told the foregoing ſtory to his coffee-houſe acquaintance, and expreſſed a deal of ſurpriſe at the neatneſs of the forgery. Price kept crying out every now and then, "Lack a day!—Good God! "who could conceive ſuch knavery could exiſt! "What, and did the Bank refuſe payment, Sir?" O yes, ſaid Mr. Spilſbury, with ſome degree of acrimony; for it was on the faith of the Bank of England that I and a great many others have taken them, and they were ſo inimitably well done, that the niceſt judges could not diſtinguiſh them. "Good God!" ſaid Price, "he muſt have been "an ingenious villain!—What a complete old "ſcoundrel!"—Let the reader figure to himſelf an honeſt worthy gentleman telling a moſt wonderful piece of knavery to the very knave himſelf, cautioning that knave to take care that he might not be taken in the ſame way, and the author of

thoſe

thoſe very villanies liſtening with attention to, and exclaiming, with uplifted eyes and hands, againſt his own practiſes, enjoying the recital with the ſame degree of ſatisfaction, the Devil did when when he ſtood behind the tree, whilſt Eve told the ſtory of her fall and diſobedience to our forefather Adam, and then ſay, whether he is loſt more in aſtoniſhment, laughter, or indignation!—Safely may we aver, that there is hardly to be found, in the whole group of mankind, a wretch, callous enough to enjoy that tranſport and delight which then muſt have filled the breaſt of the greateſt impoſtor breathing.

But though deception and plunder were his leading paſſions, hardneſs of heart was by no means behind-hand in his compoſition. The wrech that picks a pocket at an execution, pities the victim of his own practices; but Price could rejoice in the fate of a man of genius, who *once* ſtepped out of the line of honeſty, and who, caught by ſurprize, would have put a period to his exiſtence at the moment of his apprehenſion; but who, poſſeſſing principle, had reſolution, manhood, and Chriſtianity, ſufficient to ſtand the terror of legal diſſolution. We allude to Mr. Ryland, executed for forging an Eaſt-India bond. This man, whoſe fate was much lamented, having been ordered for execution, our unfeeling hero, intreated the uſe of a dining-room window in Oxford-ſtreet, at the houſe of a gentleman whom he had defrauded in the ſame manner he had done Mr. Spilſbury. On that day Mr. Price attended, at the proper time, and when Mr. Ryland paſſed, he blaſted his memory with the commiſſion of the very forgeries which he, as Price, had committed, and as Patch had

had negotiated.—" There, ſaid he, goes one of " the moſt ingenious men in the world, but as " wicked as he is ingenious—he is the identical " man who has done all the miſchief in the cha- " racter of Patch—he deſerves his fate—and he " would confeſs the fact, if he was not in hopes of " a reſpite; which he would have, perhaps, ob- " tained, had not the directors been certain that " it was charity to the public to let him ſuffer."—Contraſt this with his own conduct, and comment upon his heart. Ryland died for one offence, which he confeſſed.—Price hung himſelf for ten thouſand, which in his laſt moments he impiouſly denied.

There is one circumſtance which, though of a ſimilar nature with his other deceptions, carries with it the air of novelty, and as he behaved in a moſt ſingular manner after the fraud, we ſhall here record it.

In the foregoing part of the hiſtory, we mentioned his robbing Mr. R. of Knightſbridge. One in a family was thought too little for Mr. Price, and therefore he determined that Mr. R.'s brother, who lives in Oxford-ſtreet, ſhould experience the effects of his ingenuity. He had been often there as Mr. Price, had bought a variety of things, and was perfectly well known. He took the opportunity of calling there one day, in a hackney coach, diſguiſed as an old man, and bought ſome things. In a day or two afterwards he repeated it, and on a third day, when he knew Mr. R. was from home, he came again, his face ſo painted that he ſeemed perfectly in a yellow jaundice. The ſhopman, who came from Mancheſter, and to whom he was full of complaints, told him that he had a receipt for that diſorder, wrote by a very eminent phyſician

of

of that place, which had cured his father of it, and offered him the preſcription. Price accepted it, and promiſed that, if it ſucceeded, he would very liberally reward him for his civility. Having got the receipt, away he drove, and in a few days called again. Then he appeared perfectly free from the complaint, and acknowledged his great obligations to the ſhopman, to whom, after he had expatiated on his own ſubſtance, the ſhort time he had to live in the world, and the few relations he had to leave any thing to, he made him a preſent of a 50l. bank-note.—The reader need not be told it was a counterfeit one; but at the ſame time he ſaid, that he wanted caſh for another, and Mr. R. not being in the way, the ſhopman ſtepped over to an oppoſite tradeſman, Mr. J. and got change for it. The next day, having watched Mr. R.'s out, Price called again, and intreated the lad to get five other 50l. notes changed for ſmall ones, who, telling him Mr. R. was not in the way, Price begged he would take them to his maſter's banker, and there get them changed. This requeſt the lad complied with. The banker took them, unſuſpectingly complied with his requeſt, and they were given to Mr. Price.

It was not long before theſe notes got to the Bank, and, of courſe, were ſtopped. Enquiry took place, they were traced to the banker's, and from thence to Mr. R.'s The lad was interrogated, and he told his ſtory, ſufficiently enough indeed, for the ſolicitor of the Bank to know he had been impoſed on by Mr. Patch. The Bank refuſing to take them, the banker had recourſe to Mr. R. who likewiſe refuſed to refund the 250l. The conſequence was, an action was brought

againſt

againſt Mr. R. by the banker; it was tried in the Court of Common Pleas, in the city, before Lord Loughborough, and the banker obtained a verdict. Thus were the two Mr. R.'s robbed by their old acquaintance Price.

Had the caſe reſted here, it might not, perhaps, have been more ſtriking, than the general line of his conduct. But, in this buſineſs Price out-heroded Herod; for Mr. R. having communicated the ſtory to him, he offered him all the aſſiſtance in his power, and was actually a principal agent in the ſuit. He not only adviſed, but attended the trial, and was, of all others, the moſt active in procuring witneſſes on the part of the defendant.

The laſt fact we ſhall relate of him will ſhew in what light he conſidered religion, as well as morality.

He called on Mr. B. a bookſeller in Oxford-ſtreet, with whom he was well acquainted, and bought a few triſles, in another diſguiſe. In a few days he ſent for him to Greſſe-ſtreet, and expatiated at large on the duties of Chriſtianity.—That he often ſought out for objects of charity, eſpecially thoſe who ſhewed their attachment to God, by attending divine ſervice. He then gave an order to Mr. B. for certain pious books, gave him a 10l. note, and got the balance.——The books indeed were ſent, but, luckily, at the time of their arrival, the officers were in Greſſe-ſtreet, on Mr. Spilſbury's account, and thereby the property ſaved.—Finally, as this fraud had a religious caſt, all we can ſay is, from ſuch unparallelled impoſtors, *Good Lord deliver us.*

GENERAL

GENERAL HEADS

OF THE

MEMOIRS

OF THAT

ARCH-IMPOSTOR

CHARLES PRICE.

AN account of his father, and where he came from—his buſineſs and reſidence in Monmouth-ſtreet—a faleſman there—his character, *Page* 8

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His astonishing manner of defrauding Mr. Spilsbury—and Mr. B. of Oxford-street—Mr. R. of Oxford-street, brother to Mr. R. of Knightsbridge—and his behaviour when he saw Mr. Ryland going to execution, &c. &c. &c. *p.* 57

PREPARATORY to the TIME of PAYMENT.

As the Period fixed by Parliament for collecting the Shop and other new Taxes now draws near, the Inhabitants of this Country, from the Metropolis to the most remote Corners, become proportionably more interested in KEARSLEY's TABLES.

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